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PAKISTAN

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR DR IRFAN YUSUF SHAMI
DIRECTOR-GENERAL, CWC NATIONAL AUTHORITY
AT THE SEVENTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson

First of all let me congratulate you on your assumption of responsibilities as Chairperson of the Council. My delegation is confident that under your able leadership the Executive Council will continue to perform its crucial role to advance the objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention. To this end, Pakistan's delegation will work closely with other delegations to support you and members of the bureau in your endeavours. We would like to also appreciate the contribution of the Deputy Director-General and convey best wishes for her future assignment.

My delegation commends the Director-General for his outstanding stewardship and focused efforts to enable the OPCW to effectively address key challenges as well as his vision for the Organisation's future. We have noted the Technical Secretariat's Note on mid- to long-term staffing plan of OPCW as the Organisation is moving towards the post-destruction phase of its work. We believe that the Technical Secretariat should continue to attract the best talent for all available vacancies to work efficiently and to achieve the highest professional standards. However, it is equally important that the established criteria of equitable geographical distribution, particularly for senior executive positions, are given due weightage.

Pakistan remains fully committed to the objectives of Chemical Weapons Convention and continues to actively and constructively participate in OPCW's work. We are grateful for OPCW's cooperation in organising the first ever Regional Electronic Declarations workshop, three International Basic and one Regional Advanced Assistance and Protection courses in Islamabad. Another Advanced International Assistance and Protection course is being organised in November this year. Pakistan is also in the process of operationalising a Regional Assistance and Protection Centre in Islamabad. This centre would contribute towards further strengthening OPCW's capabilities in this field.

The CWC National Authority of Pakistan continues to undertake outreach activities with all relevant national stakeholders. In this context, a National Seminar on Chemical Safety and Security was organised in Islamabad last month, which was also attended by a senior OPCW representative. Pakistan also welcomes OPCW's initiative to establish an Advisory Board on Education and Outreach and would extend all possible support for this endeavour. Pakistan's



expert played an active role in OPCW's Scientific Advisory Board and we look forward to our continued participation in SAB's future deliberations as well.

Pakistan appreciates the work of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria. We are satisfied with what has been achieved so far with respect to the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme and look forward to the expeditious completion of remaining tasks. Pakistan reiterates strong opposition to the use of chemical weapons by anyone and under any circumstances and finds it reprehensible that chemical weapons could still be used in the 21st century. We believe that perpetrators of such heinous crimes must be held accountable.

Pakistan also reiterates its call on the OPCW to fulfil its mandated supervision of the expeditious and complete destruction of all Abandoned Chemical Weapons (ACWs) in the People's Republic of China.

We attach great importance to the provisions of the Convention relating to international cooperation and assistance as well as peaceful uses of chemistry. We believe that greater focus in these areas will generate stronger support to achieve the overall goals of the Convention. Only effective implementation of obligations for the fullest possible exchange of chemicals, equipment and related technologies for peaceful purposes will serve the long term objectives of the Convention.

In conclusion, I would like to assure the Council that my delegation would constructively participate in its deliberations. It is our hope that the spirit of consensus would continue to preserve the success of this session. I thank you and would like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the Seventy-Ninth Session of the Executive Council.

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